

March 28, 2008

The Honorable John F. Tierney
Chairman, Subcommittee on National
Security and Foreign Affairs
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am providing you the NRC's written statement, which was prepared pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 720(b), on the actions taken regarding the Government Accountability Office's (GAO) unclassified report on "Nuclear Security: Research Reactor Security" (GAO-08-403). I have separately submitted a response to the classified version of the report of the same title (GAO-08-156C). The Commission's position in this regard has not changed. Since September 11, 2001, the NRC has conducted security assessments for research and test reactor (RTR) facilities and imposed additional requirements where needed.

The Commission believes that the NRC security assessments and radiological consequence analyses considered the full range of credible adversary characteristics based on a logical, well-defined threat assessment process. Furthermore, these assessments and analyses used reports from several national laboratories, which were peer-reviewed and fully vetted, for its security and radiological consequence assessments. With these technically sound, credible inputs, the NRC assessed RTR security using the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) guidance "Risk Analysis and Management for Critical Assets Protection (RAMCAP)." The Commission finds that the security at these facilities provides adequate protection of the public health and safety and the common defense and security. Nevertheless, the NRC continues to inspect and evaluate RTR security, as well as safety, and will take additional actions as necessary.

Although the NRC does not agree with many aspects of the GAO report ("Comments from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission" Appendix I to the GAO report) and plans no further actions specifically to respond to the report's recommendations, the Commission looks forward

to continued interagency cooperation to ensure that the public health and safety and common defense and security are adequately protected at RTR facilities. Finally, in that regard, I would like to emphasize the continuing coordination between the RTR community and the U.S. Department of Energy, DHS, NRC and other Federal agencies to gain additional, voluntary security enhancements at its licensed RTRs.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Dale E. Klein

cc: Representative Christopher Shays

Identical letter sent to:

The Honorable John F. Tierney
Chairman, Subcommittee on National
Security and Foreign Affairs
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
cc: Representative Christopher Shays

The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security
and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
cc: Senator Susan M. Collins

The Honorable Henry A. Waxman
Chairman, Committee on Oversight
and Government Reform
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
cc: Representative Tom Davis

The Honorable David R. Obey
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
cc: Representative Jerry Lewis

The Honorable Robert C. Byrd
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
cc: Senator Thad Cochran

The Honorable Thomas R. Carper
Chairman, Subcommittee on Clean Air
and Nuclear Safety
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
cc: Senator George V. Voinovich

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
Chairman, Committee on Environment
and Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
cc: Senator James M. Inhofe

The Honorable Rick Boucher
Chairman, Subcommittee on Energy
and Air Quality
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
cc: Representative Fred Upton

The Honorable John D. Dingell
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
cc: Representative Joe Barton

The Honorable Peter J. Visclosky
Chairman, Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
cc: Representative David L. Hobson

The Honorable Byron Dorgan
Chairman, Subcommittee on Energy
and Water Development
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
cc: Senator Pete V. Domenici

The Honorable David M. Walker
Comptroller General of the United States
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20548
cc: Mr. Gene Aloise